

**Environmental Commission
Meeting Minutes
June 4, 2014**

In Attendance:

Dave Colteryahn, chair
Greg LoBuono, vice-chair
Veronica Craig, recording secretary
Adam Sackenheim
Becky Montag
Tom Nault
Gwen Ritchie
Bob Schappacher, Parks and Recreation Representative

Absent: Rodney Spencer, Chuck Ullrich

Meeting was called to order at 6:02 p.m. by chairperson Dave Colteryahn.

New Member: Gwen Ritchie introduced herself and was welcomed by the EC.

Minutes: The minutes for the May 7th meeting were approved with one addition: The reason the milkweed pods are being planted at Huffman Park to attract monarch butterflies, as per a study by Miami grad student Ken Willman.

Standing Business

Correspondence/Articles: Adam discussed a stream stabilization project and shared photos of the process. Funded by Butler County Wastewater and Sewage, eco-friendly methods such as willow staking and wrapped earth were used to stabilize a stretch of Mill Creek, thus creating wetlands and checking erosion.

Tom reported back to the EC that the Izaak Walton League had successfully completed their spring planting, one of two each year. Since 1994, 1700 trees have been planted in our area. This year the fourth graders planted northern red oaks, a native hardwood tree.

EC Activity Hours: Dave/1, Greg/1, Veronica/2.

Adopt-A-Roadway: Tom will be doing the July/August clean-up. The schedule for the rest of the year is as follows: Sept./Oct. – Dave; Nov./Dec. – Adam.

Parks Board Report

Bob shared highlights of the meeting. CORA, the Ohio mountain biking association, gave a short presentation. They made a request for .8 miles of additional trails. CORA volunteers are a real asset to our community. Last year they logged over 300 hours keeping the trails at Harbin Park cleared and picked up. Both bikers and hikers benefit from their hard work.

Parks Board visited the Aquatic Center to view the \$250K in improvements. There are new liners in both the regular and baby pools, alleviating painting and reducing water loss, which has been a problem. Some of the funds were also used for a new sand filter.

Parks Department Report

Website Update: Bob explained to Gwen that the EC website is monitored for informational purposes, and generally shows an upswing in spring and in the warmer months.

Additional Signage: The extra Tree City sign requested by the EC has arrived and will be installed soon in front of Cincinnati Financial.

Tree Seminar at Forest Park: Wendi will host short seminar on Forest Park's reforestation program on June 10th from 6:30 to 7:30 at their Senior Center. The public is invited.

Master Plan: The Parks Department will conduct two stakeholder meetings to seek input on the 10-year master plan. These open public meetings will be held on June 24th and 25th at 6:00 p.m. at the Community Arts Center. Residents are encouraged to attend and share their ideas.

Commissioner Reports

Honor Grove Update: Seven trees are in the ground, and Bob has had applications for two more, which will be planted in the fall. Additional funds are available for this new park and will be used to extend the irrigation system to Crystal Drive. Tags are on the trees. The plaque and stonework base on which it will be mounted are forthcoming.

Other Business

Summer Meetings: The EC voted to not meet in July, as many members would not be able to attend. They will hold the next meeting as scheduled on August 6th.

Invitation to Wendi Van Buren: The EC would like ODNR's Wendi Van Buren to attend an upcoming meeting. Dave will contact her and see if she is available for the August or September meeting. She will discuss the next Tree Academy. It is to be held this fall in Hamilton.

Tandem Meeting: Greg will e-mail Hamilton's Tree Board and set a date and location for a tandem Hamilton/Fairfield meeting. The EC and their Tree Board have expressed interest in a dual meeting to discuss issues both cities face.

Kudos: EC member Becky wanted to recognize the City and its crew for the excellent improvements they did on the stretch between Gilmore and 275. They did a great job making this gateway area more welcoming to visitors and residents.

New Gas Lines on Tallawanda: EC vice-chair Greg reported that gas line replacement is underway in this area, and noted that there are trees that likely will need to be trimmed or removed to allow for removal of old lines and installation of new ones.

Calendar:

ODNR Urban Forestry Seminar – June 10 at 6:30 to 7:30, Forest Park Senior Center

Parks Board Meeting – June 17, 2014 at 6:00 pm, CAC

EC Meeting – August 6, 2014 at 6:00 pm, CAC

Adjournment: at 7:02 pm